REFUGEE ENGAGEMENT FORUM (REF)

The 22nd REF Meeting Report:

REF Meeting happening from 27th – 29th August 2025 at Silver Springs Hotel in Bugolobi, Kampala-Uganda.

Day 1: 27th. August.2025

Session title: Self-introduction and Opening remark
Session time: 0900hr-0930hr
Session Objective: To bring the house to order and get to know each other.
Presenter name and organization: Ms. Milly Lagu-REF member.
The meeting was opened with a word of prayer led by a volunteer REF member (Women Rep from Kyaka Refugee Settlement). Thereafter, the participants introduced themselves by name, position, and settlement/organization. The house used the same opportunity to welcome Jerry back to REF. The entire group was so happy that he is back and pledged to work with him for greater heights. Paul's replacement -Gloria was introduced to the participants as well.
The REF members then suggested the house rules such as having mobile phones on silence, good time management, active participation, one meeting, equal participation, respecting one's opinion, every answer is correct.

Session I title: Key takeaways and action points from the previous REF meeting – review.
Session time: 9:45am- 10:30am
Session Objective: To provide status updates on the implementation of the key takeaways and action points from the 21st REF meeting.
Presenter name and organization: Nangera Tausi Granie-Ulearn

Key points presented.

NO	Action Point	Responsibility	Progress /Update
21st REF Meeting- 18th-20th September 2024.			
1	**UNHCR and OPM to lobby for** funding of the refugee response plans, specifically the Jobs and livelihoods.	OPM/UHCR	Updates embedded within different presentations and more plans embedded with in the UCRRP 2026-2023
2	OPM requires partners in MoUs to align interventions to SRPs and GRF thematic areas.	OPM	
3	Health partners in the settlement and those at the national referral level to work together to ensure that they improve the way services are delivered.	UNHCR	Suggestion to invite health implementing partners in the next REF Meeting
4	UNHCR to Organize health training for the REF members in the next REF meeting.	UNHCR	Suggestion to invite health implementing partners in the next REF Meeting
5	REF members champion positive mindset change in their settlements.	REF members	All RWC 3 conducted mindset change meetings using the available platforms within their various settlements. Refugees are encouraged to work in groups, mix with the host and also utilize the recommended financial institutions.
6	**REF members to** on timely basis organize REF community feedback and consultation meetings. Ensure the participants are representative enough.	REF members	These meetings have been conducted with good representation in all the settlements with support from ULEARN.

7	**REF** members popularize the refugee GRF pledges, and work with their communities to meet these pledges.	REF members	Trees have been planted- the REF-DEF reports clearly indicate the progress. Members are sensitized about the pledges, and many refugees have embraced taking children to school.
8	REF members to support in mobilization for the forthcoming transition field consultations in the various districts.	REF members	Some REF participated in the transition consultations, and their contributions were incorporated.
9	REF members to work with the community leaders to urge their community members to abide by the law as they are hosted in Uganda	REF members	This is continuously done using the locally available platforms.
10	UNHCR to work with the Education partners to continue with the equating of refugee academic papers.	UNHCR	UNHCR Education department to give an update
11	REF TF to develop a tool for tracking implementation status of the REF 2023 GRF pledges	REF TF	This was developed by GIZ and its operational
13	CRRF Sec together with the REF TF to organize the REF-DEF interface for Southwest	CRRF	2 interfaces were successfully held and a full report on the findings was presented.
14	OPM/UNHCR to follow up on the case of the lost 500million from a SACCO in Kyaka	OPM/UNHCR	This was taken up by OPM, the person was arrested and released on bond, the leaders wish the sureties would pay on his behalf.
15	OPM, UNHCR and WFP to chat out durable solutions to the challenges arising from the shifting from Cash in Cash to Cash in Sim Card	OPM	Updates will be picked from the EFP presentations.

Need to invite Health implementing partners to the next REF for synergy and proper understanding of the referral process.

Session II title: Gloria REF co-chair (UNHCR)

Session time: 10:45-10:50am
Session Objective: To officially welcome and open the meeting

- She welcomed all the members to the meeting. She highlighted that many other UNHCR colleagues will be joining within the day. She Encouraged the leaders to utilize this free space, share, discuss and dialogue freely. Thanked GIZ for organizing this meeting, OPM and other partners.

Session II title: Opening remarks from Ms. Agness – DoR/OPM
Session time: 10:15-11:00am
Session Objective: To officially welcome and open the meeting
Key points presented:

- Welcomed all the participants to the meeting, thanked those that attended the REF-DEF interface. Thanked GIZ for supporting the REF meeting.
- Emphasized that this is a critical platform for the leaders, it's inclusive for all nationalities.
- Thanked the leaders for putting all the needs of the refugees at heart.
- Highlighted that this is another opportunity for deliberating on how best we can come up with solutions. She committed and declared the meeting open.

Session III title: Action points from REF-DEF Interface from 12th-14th August 2025
Session time: 11:00am- 12:44pm
Session Objective: To Openly discuss what came out from the 2 REF-DEF meetings in Kiryandongo and Kikuube and Kikuube and Koboko
To ascertain the key updates regarding the GRF Pledges
Presenter name and organization: Willy-CRRF/OPM

The Republic Of Uganda

ACTION ISSUES FROM THE 2025 DEF-REF INTERFACE.

Pending issues from the 2024 REF AND DEF Interface.

General observation

- **Addressing the issue of boundaries between the Refugee Hosting Districts.**
- **Upgrading the status of Kiryandongo into Municipality Status.**

No.	Issue and Recommendations	Responsible
1.	**Social Cohesion and Peaceful co-existence:** In Kiryandongo Refugee Settlement, conflicts were reported between South Sudanese and Sudanese refugees. One such clash resulted in the death of one refugee and injuries to 31 others.Additionally, cases of juveniles in conflict with the law were observed, with most being subjected to community service. Overall, crime rates in the Kiryandongo and other refugee refugee settlements and hosting areas remain high, with over 113 refugees convicted between January 2025 and the time of the interface	

	in Kiryandongo alone. This situation is compounded by the absence of functional justice systems, including courts and remand facilities. Specifically, Terego and Madi-Okollo districts lack magistrate courts, while Kiryandongo requires a children's remand center. However, the establishment of such a facility is at odds with existing standards, which allow only one children's remand center per region.	
	Consider separating South Sudanese and Sudanese refugees into different settlements to reduce intergroup conflict.	OPM, UNHCR
	Establish a children's remand center in Kiryandongo to address juvenile justice needs.	MoLG, District and OPM
	Establish magistrate courts in Madi-Okollo and Terego districts and deploy police officers to refugee-hosting sub-counties in line with national standards.	MoLG and OPM
2.	**Settlement and Institutional land.** In some refugee settlements, refugees have begun constructing permanent structures, contrary to settlement regulations. It was also observed that some refugees are purchasing and owning property outside the settlements. A study has been conducted to establish the extent of land and property ownership by refugees. In Kiryandongo Settlement, part of the settlement land is being encroached upon and sold. Furthermore, some settlement land is not owned by OPM, UNHCR, or District Local Governments (DLGs) but remains under private landlords. This ownership arrangement limits government-led development initiatives on such land. In addition, portions of institutional land that could be developed for government projects are under the ownership of religious institutions. Many of these institutions have not	
	Settlement Commandants should be instructed to halt the construction of permanent structures within refugee settlements.	OPM
	District Engagement Forum (DEF) members should direct Local Council I leaders not to approve the sale of land and property to refugees.	OPM and DLGs
	Refugee-hosting Districts (RHDs) should compile and submit a list of religious institutions withholding development approvals of public institutions on their land to the relevant line Ministries specifically the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) and the Ministry of Health (MoH) with OPM and UNHCR copied, for further guidance and follow-up.	MoLG, OPM and DLGs

3.	**Service Delivery (Education, Health, Water Supply and Sanitation).** **Education:** In Kiryandongo and Kikuube districts, schools are facing severe overcrowding. At Maratatu Primary School and Arnold Primary School, both government-run institutions, the enrolments stand at 7,097 and 4,191 pupils respectively, with refugees making up 98% of the school population. Despite the high enrolment, the two schools together have only 73 teachers, resulting in an overstretched teacher-to-pupil ratio and underperformance against key education indicators. Access to water and sanitation facilities is also a major challenge, exacerbated by the overwhelming school population. This issue was highlighted during the 2025 interface as one of the most pressing concerns, particularly considering recent funding cuts. The Education Response Plan (ERP) Secretariat notes a 17% reduction in the number of teachers and a more than 70% reduction in the number of teaching assistants and caregivers, further worsening the situation. **Health:** Health Centres are similarly overcrowded and lack essential infrastructure. Panyadoli Health Centre IV in Kiryandongo, which serves both refugees and host communities, has a catchment population exceeding 200,000 people and operates at the level of a hospital far beyond its designated capacity. In Kyangwali, the Health Centre IV lacked a mortuary, while both facilities visited faced inadequate water, sanitation, and power supply. Staffing levels remain below required standards, limiting the effective delivery service. Additionally, the high prevalence of teenage pregnancy was noted, further straining already overstretched health services. **Water Supply and Sanitation (WASH):** Many schools and health facilities in refugee-hosting areas lack adequate water supply and sanitation facilities. The challenge is compounded by the high population in schools and limited resources available to meet WASH needs. This has direct implications on health, hygiene, and the overall quality of service delivery in these institutions.	
	Addressing Human Resource constraints by fast-tracking the implementation of the new government structures for health centres to strengthen hospital and health centre service delivery in refugee-hosting districts. Increase the wage bill allocations for refugee-hosting local governments to enable the recruitment of additional health and education staff to meet high service delivery demands.	MoPS, UNHCR and OPM
	The Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), in collaboration with UNHCR, should develop a special report with concrete measures for addressing overcrowding in refugee-hosting schools. For schools like Arnold and Maratatu Primary, establishment of additional schools could be the best solution to reduce overcrowding	MoES, OPM and UNHCR
	Expand and strengthen education infrastructure and services, including additional classrooms, laboratories, libraries, sick bays, teacher housing, boarding facilities, reliable water supply (motorized boreholes), and hydroelectric power connection.	MoES, OPM and UNHCR

	Enhance partnerships and support mechanisms, by engaging UNHCR, non-traditional donors, and partners with MoUs with OPM to support school infrastructure, while also strengthening the school feeding program (currently reaching only 500 out of 7,097 learners) and expediting the coding of Kiryandongo High School by the Ministry of Education.	CRRF, MoES, UNHCR
	Infrastructure and Facility Improvements: There is urgent need to strengthen health infrastructure in Panyadoli and Maratatu, including fencing Kyangwali HCIV, constructing a mortuary, providing reliable power supply (generator and solar lights), building staff housing, improving the compounds (planting grass), and expanding overall infrastructure through increased government funding.	MoH, UNHCR and OPM
4.	**Self-Reliance and Resilience of Refugees:** It was observed that most refugees are engaged in a range of economic activities, both small- and large-scale. Refugees and host communities also participate in block farming initiatives. In Kiryandongo, two refugee-led enterprises were highlighted as examples of full self-reliance, employing both refugees and host community members, and demonstrating reduced dependency on humanitarian assistance. However, access to land remains a significant challenge, limiting the potential for agricultural expansion and other livelihood opportunities.	
	Advocate for increased access to land to support agricultural and livelihood activities.	DLGs
	Scale up and diversify livelihood initiatives beyond small-scale activities, with a focus on market-oriented and sustainable enterprises that benefit both refugees and host communities.	UNCHR and Lead Implementing Partner on Livelihoods

- Refugees are taking on leadership roles- head boy and head girls are refugees in some schools.
- The school visited had both old trees and young trees which were planted in honor of the GRF pledges.

Some patients in Panyadoli sleep on the flow.

Key actions from the interface

- **Social cohesion and peaceful co-existence (conflicts between host and refugees then juveniles-113 already in court)- There is only 1 remand home in Masindi.**
- **Establish a remand Home in Kiryandongo.**
- **Establish police stations in each sub county hosting refugees.**
- **Consider separating south Sudanese from Sudanese.**

Key issues from the REF Members

- REF Members are not involved in planning activities- REF members did not know their areas where they went- Ensure that REF members are brought on board on time so that they are part through out.
- Talent development is not yet developed, especially among the youth, for example music, drama, sports and art and yet this can be used for self-reliance and resilience since many people can survive on talents.
- Service delivery across settlements. Refugees have taken the children to school, but the enrollment is too high, the government and UNHCR need to intervene now because mobilization has been made. Health is the same, not even Panadol can be got from the health centers.
- Many Sudanese ran away from kiryandongo due to the recent conflict between South Sudanese and Sudanese. These can not go back to pick their ratio from kiryandongo due to security and safety issues. What is the government doing about it? **- It will be flagged further.**

NOTE: Is it possible to have partners who can train leaders/community members on re-usable pads using the local materials.

Some settlements- students do not receive pads- these are lobule, palorinya, imvepi, palabek, kiryandongo and these are restricted to a certain age.

- Leaders are requesting transport during interface
- Taping into government projects like GROW
- Power extension
- Money requested at school per child, yet some parents cannot afford it.
- Not all school going girls receive pads because they are partner based and in some schools such partners are not present.
- In some schools, refugee students in private schools pay higher than the host community.
- IGA should be extended to the landlords
- Education- teachers have been phased out, their NSSF is not paid out.
- Refugees are not enrolled under government which will affect refugees during transition in terms of employment.
- There is studio, fully equipped but not yet operationalized.

Session IV title: Status on the development of the localization strategy- One of the pledges that was made by the government of Uganda during the GRF

Session time: 12:45pm- 1:37pm

Session Objective: To Include localization provisions in strategies and frameworks for refugee response to strengthen the role of local actors and national responders to gradually achieve grand bargain commitment by 2027.

Presenter name and organization: Willy-CRRF Secretariat

Some of the policies guiding the localization include; the refugee act 2006 and regulation 2010, NGO ACT 2016 and Policy 2012, the local government act, the National Development Plan IV and the national local content bill

The international bodies include; The UN 2020 agenda for sustainable development, the Global compact on Refugees and the CRRF, the 2016 Grand Bargain and the Humanitarian Donor ship principle.

- ✓ REF are requested to champion ownership of the localization strategy
- ✓ Support to re-in force localization provisions across all refuge settlements.

Reaction from REF Members

- ❖ **How far are we with the grand bargain yet we hv to achieve by 2027-Res so far only 3% has been achieved.**
- ❖ **Request for flex funding and the strict requirements are too many and yet competing with international Organizations.**
- ❖ **The involvement of the REF leaders in localization is still scanty even the RLOs do not even know the REF leaders.**
- ❖ **Few local partners are supported. For example, Tumaine is partnering with almost all INGOs and yet there are RLOs- engagements are done before engaging a local partner but selection is mostly done for those which are more prepared with most of the requirements needed.**
- ❖ **NDP IV leaders participated in the planning but never got even a single book.**
- ❖ **Need to clearly differentiate between CBOs and RLOs. RLOs go ahead and form CBOs and funds are transferred to the CBOs.**
- ❖ **No feedback provided before the final plan is signed off.**

Session V title: The UCRRP 2026-2030- Uganda Country Refugee Response Plan
Session time: 2:38pm- 5pm
Session Objective: To plan for the refugee response by all partners in the Refugee response for the next 5 years (This links with the CRRF and the regional Refugee Response Plan).
Presenter name and organization: Richard Duuki-UNHCR
Key points presented.

- ❖ Protection and asylum space preserved.
- ❖ Life saving needs are prioritized and met
- ❖ Inclusive and resilience services
- ❖ Peaceful coexistence and participatory self-reliance
- ❖ Pathways to Durable solutions

REF Responses

- ✓ The block farming which is put under priority is mismanaged by partner and there is no productivity got from the block farms. They are far from homes- Nakivale**- Res-The blocks were huge and with the use of manual labour could not handle hence planting late, but the livelihood partners are working towards rectifying such challenges.**
- ✓ Partners responsible for provision of seedlings are not providing them, refugees are managing on their own- Nakivale
- ✓ Market linkages are still a problem; there is no storage hence farmers selling directly to middle met -Kyaka- **Res- Consultative market meetings will be done, storage still challenges. Such has been brought to sector working groups.**
- ✓ 34 Refugees were arrested by NFA due to land hiring, Kyaka **-Res- NFA utilities court is only one and in Kampala and that is the reason why they were brought to Kampala.**
- ✓ Private sectors have done a lot of harm, they were brought up but the interest rate, procession fee and insurance are high.
- ✓ The climate change, the 1st season there was no rain, they advised irrigation, but it is very expensive.
- ✓ **Financial linkages- work with the recommended banks eg UGAFODE, Centenary, opportunity among others.**
- ✓ ECDs should be transitioned to primary schools.
- ✓ **Environment, there are both partner implementing organisations and others, DCA, Nsamizi and LWF are in different settlements. These are responsible for seedlings, woodlots and recycling of plastics.**
- ✓ Reduction on police posts is impacting on the security of many parts in the settlement-**Discussions are under way whether there is a possibility of having case by case especially in settlements.**
- ✓ Delayed distribution of seedlings
- ✓ It is now a year without a police vehicle in Orucinga
- ✓ Short period allocated for skilling for example 3 months.

Need to bring in a police representative from police as other sectors bring in representatives to take us through the police protocols.

- ✓ Is there a possibility of creating cooperatives for the refugees**- Plans are to strengthen the already existing mature groups to register as cooperatives for them to bargain for themselves and appreciate bulk selling.**
- ✓
  - ✓ What is the fate of the refugee teachers who lost their contracts. Is it possible to be brought back so that they are paid under PTA?- **More discussions should be held on how these teachers can be supported.**
  - ✓ Graduating to the resilience programs-Reports show that the community is doing well yet on ground people are still struggling, some families were forced to graduate**- the approach is the same but more bilateral discussions will be held on the same.**
  - ✓ Firewood is used because the other sources are limited. Is it possible to allow partners who can bring the solar cooking system at a subsidized price? The ones in the settlements are expensive**. Res- The government is running an ESP**

in all the districts in Uganda and discussions are underway for refugee inclusion, connection of refugee households to the electricity.

- ✓ Grant wining through TVET is done from kampala and it requires English which most refugees can not speak that is why they fail.
- ✓ Cooperatives need land as security, but most refugees have no land.
- ✓ The tractor which was bought 2 years ago has not done any work. It is parked since. **Res-Mismanagement by partners but a new approach of revamping the strategy again. The one for Adjuman is working.**
- ✓ Postmortem reports take long, which makes the body rot and yet there are no body bags.
- ✓ Marriage certificate is by law but at the district they tell us 700,000**/=**
- ✓ UCRRN should include talent development since many youths are blessed differently.
- ✓ Capitation grants, when that money comes it is shared by the district and head teachers.
- ✓ Registration is taking long but for Somalis has been put on hold.
- ✓ High levels of drug addiction, especially those using tramadol. They get them from clinics.
- ✓ Referrals to butabika not clear, when someone is brought, no information is given to the family. One boy got lost from butabika and no information was given**. Res-Referral is a medical decision by the Doctor, some delays are because of budget reduction, services being available and emergency cases are handled first. Reverse referrals are taking place, VHTs are selected by the community not UNHCR. Mental health is still wanting in most settlements, no funding has been given to butabika, net year UNHCR is considering sending them some funds to beef up their operation.**

<u>Day 2: 28th. Aug.2025</u>

Session title: SRG Meeting program
Session time: 09:05hr-10:35am
Session Objective: To take the participants through how the SG program and Key action points from the 23rd SG Decisions.
Presenter name and organization: Jerry- UNHCR

- **Details on and painting a picture on how the 2 two representatives (Gave a platform for the leaders to guide the 2 representatives on what they should not leave during the SG presentation.**

- The guidance is on the impact of the reduced funding to the refugee operations.
- The self-reliance tool does not differentiate between those who are already self-reliant and those who are not yet.
- There is a problem of 1 client benefiting from various partners when others are struggling

- Trees. Updates from OPM show that GRF trees have been planted and numbers are given, however leaders do not know where
  these trees – **Res use the block leaders to always update you on what is happening in various blocks and the RWC 3 should keep proper records**
- How far has UNHCR gone with engaging the Financial and private sector especially the livelihood sector- **Res Private sector strategy was developed by the ministry that will quote the private sector to focus on Refugees. UNHCR has an MOU with PSFU that aims at summarizing the existing private sector that are important for refugees with medium and long term for sustainability plans.**
- Any update on the tool to capture the GRF pledges. **Res tool was developed, and members will be taken through the tool for everyone to understand.**

What is expected to be presented

EDUCATION:

- ✓ Scholarship slots are not enough
- ✓ Overcrowding in schools, for example maratatu in Kyangwali
- ✓ Teacher to pupil ratio

SELF RELIANCE

- ✓ Very few employment opportunities, especially for the youth
- ✓ Inadequate women empowerment, instead of small grants-
- ✓ Livelihood support for leaders- a special program for the whole leadership across settlement
- ✓ Skills durations. 3 months is small time at least be raised to 6 months

ENVIRONMENT

- ✓ Influx of new people is disorganized the environment, **- new arrivals need to be sensitized. Ask- partners should target to engage the new arrivals on the spot as they come in.**
- ✓ The population increases with low interventions in energy. This has put a lot of pressure on the existing one hence scarcity.

DURABLE SOLUTION

- ✓ Need to engage the refugee manufacturing countries on discussions of peace which reduce pressure on burden sharing.

PROTECTION

- ✓ Urgent attention to legal cases eg children in homes which are not child friendly, police themselves are not child friendly
- ✓ More attention to GBV Cases
- ✓ Involvement of leaders in the follow up on the convicted refugees

- ✓ Inclusion of refugees in government programs since we are close to transition. For example, GROW, DRDIP, UNDP among others.

ADVOCAY

More advocacy for funding.
Need to scale settlement level exhibitions for entrepreneurs targeting refugees to help them achieve self-reliance.

Need to bring a GROW person in the next REF to give us all the information about GROW Project

Session title: UNHCR Country Rep
Session time: 10:35am-12:07pm
Session Objective: UNHCR Country Rep interacting with the REF Members.
Presenter name and organization: Country Rep- UNHCR

Agie- CRRF/OPM

Welcomed everyone as chair for the REF to discuss the issues affecting the refugees. REF Started in 2018; it has 2 representatives on the SG. This is an opportunity to give space for refugees to speak for themselves. REF is supported by the task force (Government, UN and other partners). In 2021, ULEARN carried out a study which highlighted the uniqueness of the accountability model. This is not just a consultation program but a bridge which brings everyone on board. The REF has currently sat 22 times. Many decisions have been made from this sitting while others are still in pipeline due to the funding fatigue. Asked the Rep is for more funding to have the REF alive.

Country Rep- Mathew- Been in UNHCR for 31 years with 10 assignments.

- ❖ After 22 meetings, the objective of the REF would have been met, if not why are not objectives met? This is an advocacy forum, from the consultative and feedback meetings, partners are brought together with leaders, but this is a higher-level advocacy which addresses and allow members to represent the voiceless.
- ❖ He congratulated the new members who have joined the REF, use this platform to network and learn new ways of ho w things are done from different settlements**.**
- ❖ In this meeting, we are here to understand the key needs of refugees. Advised the not to be shy about the needs, we cannot promise to address everything but not every problem needs money. Money is critical, as funding goes down is to ask yourself whether you can do things differently. Last year UNHCR signed 35 grants MOU with RLOs.
- ❖ Encouraged leaders to be vigilant. Always share with the leaders those RLOs that UNHCR has signed grants with.
- ❖ Thanks to FRRM through which they can get feedback on thigs which are doing or not doing well.

- ❖ UNHCR expands its engagement with the RLOs because they are on ground. The VHTs who are based in the communities have helped in saving a lot of money.
- ❖ UNHCR has reduced administrative costs through cutting money on fuel, and the saving is used to buy soap and sanitary pads for the new arrivals. More plans for buying a phone to the family.
- ❖ Thanked the leaders for the work in ensuring peace in settlements. He urged partners not to target specific nationalities because this causes insecurity.
- ❖ Advised the leaders to sound the drum early enough.
- ❖ Livelihoods is a major problem, 30by 30 cannot bring people out of poverty. UNHCR is coordinating all partners in livelihoods to ensure that livelihoods are supported. That is why self-help programs are paramount.
- ❖ Urged that this is a very big forum, and through the CRRF- UNHCR will know what is required to sustain the REF.
- ❖ Advised the leaders to advise UNHCR oh how best they should best engage the Donors so that they can give us more money. since they have funded us for so long.
- ❖ Urged refugees to change their mindset especially in this period of donor fatigue. Promised that UNHCR will do its best by reducing on costs including staff themselves and OPM as well.

Issue

Urban refugee registration has been suspended. **Resp-There are some reasons why it was stopped. This is because the asylum systems was abused especially for resettlement. However, there is some flexibility to the extreme cases.**

Peace-This lies more in the political wing and yet with UN, we are impartial.

Leaders should continue sensitizing the community on mindset change because the donor funding situation is not getting better.

Session III title: FRRM -Updates on the key issues prevailing from the community
Session time: 12:10pm-02:09pm
Session Objective: To discuss the key issues prevailing about FFRM from the community and the rebranding.
Presenter name and organization: Abgail and Moshen– UNHCR

She took the participants through a refresher, asking them about the FRRM number, the days of the week they work, and the number of languages spoken 38. She highlighted that they are re-branding to we. Link. with a slogan- ULIZA- We listen

- They have 28 agents based in Kampala
- 38 languages
- 1000 focal points/users
- They work from Monday-Sunday (8:30 am-6:30pm).
- Over 1,100,000 cases since 2018.
-

What are the benefits

- Enhance integrity and accountability
- Diversity of languages

- Amplify the voice of the forcibly displaced and the host community
- Ensure access to reliable information.
- Provide data points for protection making decisions
- Affordable to the user.
- Reliable recorded content for consistent follow ups
- Inclusion of people with specific needs.

Integrity

- ✓ The common one is Fake websites and social media posts.
- ✓ Illegal refuge facilitators and brokers.
- ✓ Refugee Welfare Committee (RWC) members and government officials asking for bribes for services i.e issuance of refugee ID.

How do leaders truck the GRF Pledges

- ✓ Through headmasters, looking at the enrollment
- ✓ Monthly reports
- ✓ Village meetings

Leaders should take interest in trucking progress on the GRF pledges in their various jurisdictions.

Session IV title: Drafting key messages with the REF representatives for presentation on the CRRF Steering Group.
Session time: 03:15pm-05:20pm
Session Objective: To come up with key issues to be presented during the SG.
Presenter name and organization: Brian Matsiko-ULEARN

Presentation by ULEARN-IMPACT- Amos

- Brief descriptions of weather and climate
- What climate change is and what causes climate change
- Focus of the climate risk profiles which focus on the climate hazards, who is exposed to the hazards (human lives, people livelihoods)
- The influx has led to pressure on land, water and services intensified
- Understanding climate risks and how it impacts on the population
- Purpose to support risk informed humanitarian and development planning
- For reference to Yumbe, there is a sharp increase in heat (2020-2024) thus risking crop failure, poor crop harvest and water shortage.

Session VI title: AAP
Session time: 10:02am-10:54am
Session Objective: To equip REF members with AAP knowledge
Presenter name and organization: Brian Matsiko-ULEARN

Findings from the REF consultation

-REF is an effective mechanism for Refugees.
-CBOs have the capacity to implement.
-CBOs can lead awareness in GBV, WASH and livelihoods.
-Partners to work with RWCS leaders and their sectoral departments.
-Need to improve accountability, communicate progress and deliver on commitments.

Next Steps

- Additional targeted consultations
- Develop MEAL framework
- Peer review for quality assurance of the strategy and national validation
-

What is AAP?

Response from the participants
-Inclusion, the vulnerable community should be involved in project design
-Engagement of the stakeholders in all the activities
-Understanding the responsibilities to our partners and partners towards the community
-Being transparent to ourselves as leaders and partners
Feedback sharing and accountability to affected populations

Session VI: Outcome of the appeal process (Joint prioritization of General Food Assistance Results from Appeals 2025)
Session time: 12:10pm-01:30pm
Organization: WFP
Facilitator: Nelson, Lilian and Matinda

- Significant changes identified- a 2 months' window was provided to place appeals and update information in ProGre
- Uganda needs 2.2million dollars for the next 6 months

Next steps

-Feedback to appellants (Starting September)
-WFP-UNHCR OPM will hold joint exercise to inform next steps of prioritization
-WFP-UNHCR OPM Will hold regional review and workshops (Q1 2026)
- WFP-UNHCR OPM Will provide general announcements, in messages or available channels

Reaction from the participants

- REF Members should be involved in through calls and meeting
- Share the strategic plan for WFP
- Some people failed to update their information due to staffing gap of OPM staff
- The young people should be assessed individually to verify the level of vulnerability
- Natural disasters are affecting the settlement such as prolonged drought which makes people more vulnerable
- There is information gap, they have no coordinated information
- Decisions should be made jointly not made at the Kampala level.
- why are there no local organizations in the food assistance chain
- There is a tendency to prioritize those that are not vulnerable especially by the categorization method
- During the information sharing on categories should not be done in public, this breeds insecurity in the long run
- Decisions seem to be made at the head offices in Kampala and do not reflect the vulnerability on the ground.

Response to participants

-Decisions were made from the UNHCR data, PSN codes that were used to refill in the profiles.
-It had elements of community consultations especially for category 3.
-The food reduction was done expeditiously so that they would work with what was available and acknowledge the fact that there are some gaps
-Data is obtained in various ways, through protection case management and from other different interventions, all that is within the system, which is shared with WFP
-The update of personal information in different field sites is generally fine its only isolated cases which have not been brough to UNHCR notice.

-Reduction in livelihood support, 500,000 clients are affected, the government has however made commitments for the basics like land.
-Co-ordinating with the existing livelihood projects with a single pact which will provide information on the availability of services
-Encouraged to participate in project inceptions so that they may be put to account
-Co-ordinate with the livelihood partners for more sustainable means
-Categorization and prioritization are not dependable on appearance rather on the information that was present in the UNHCR data base.
-It's not possible to share information on individual basis, putting in mind the limitations on the ground, information desks seem to be the best option.
-The remaining undistributed food is taken back to the store, and food is given in the current month not the previous month
-Switching places in the categorization has a process, encouraged to provide more information to WFP to support the process
-More options are being explored, access to credit, business registration, working with IFC and other international bodies, there are open hot lines if there is an issue, physical interaction is becoming difficult due to the financial constraints at hand.

NO	Action Point	Responsibility	Progress /Update
KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE 22ND REF MEETING HELD AT SILVER SPRINGS HOTEL BUGOLOBI, KAMPALA DATE; 27TH-29TH AUG 2025			
1	Invite the health partners to the next REF meeting for them to explain the health referral pathway.	REF TF	
2	Promote peaceful coexistence and social cohesion amongst the refugees and between the refugees and host communities	REF members, OPM, UNHCR & partners	
3	Invite the environment protection partners to the next REF meeting to facilitate the implementation of the 2023 GRF pledges	REF TF	
4	Government to continue to advocate for more funding to the refugee operations in Uganda	CRRF	
5	REF members to continue working with livelihood partners to promote self-reliance and resilience. Livelihood partners to integrate talent development for the youths leveraging on youths' potential in music, dance and drama, sports and other arts to empower them with sustainable livelihoods.	REF members, UNHCR & OPM	
6	Refugee leaders to engage with the various RLOs and monitor the implementation of their projects	REF members	
7	REF members to work with their communities to change their mindset and adopt positive coping mechanisms	REF members	
8	REF members work together with the fellow leaders to track and provide updates on the implementation of the 2023 GRF pledges. REF members to establish the status	REF members & REF TF	

	of the implementation of the REF pledges. REF TF to share the tool for tracking the GRF pledges.		
9	Need to institutionalize the REF-DEF interface	REF & DEF members	
10.	REF members support disseminating information on the reprioritization appeal process at their settlement.	REF members	
11	Continue advocating for land for agricultural activities	OPM, UNHCR & REF members	
12	Work with the OPM to encourage women engaged in businesses to take advantage of the GROW project. Invite the GROW project rep for the next REF meeting to provide more information on the project.	REF members REF TF	
13	UNHCR to share data on RLOs with the REF members	UNHCR	

Additional notes

- REF Members are not involved in planning activities- REF members did not know their areas where they went- Ensure that REF members are brought on board on time so that they are part through out.
- The involvement of the REF leaders in localization is still scanty even the RLOs do not even know the REF leaders.
- Financial linkages- work with the recommended banks eg UGAFODE, Centenary, opportunity etc.
- Reduction in police posts is impacting the security of many parts in the settlement. Discussions are under way whether there is a possibility of having case by case especially in settlements.
- Need to bring in a police representative from police as other sectors bring in representatives to take us through the police protocols.

- Firewood is used because the other sources are limited. Is it possible to allow partners who can bring the solar cooking system at a subsidized price? The ones in the settlements are expensive. Res- The government is running an ESP in all the districts in Uganda and discussions are underway for refugee inclusion, connection of refugee households to the electricity.
- Private sector strategy was developed by the ministry that will support the private sector to focus on Refugees. UNHCR has an MOU with PSFU that aims at summarizing the existing private sector that are important for refugees with medium and long term for sustainability plans.
- The food reduction was done expeditiously and acknowledge the fact that there are some gaps, they will be working on them, WFP-UNHCR OPM will hold joint exercise to inform next steps of prioritization and will provide general announcements, in messages through available channels.
- Co-ordinating with the existing livelihood projects with a single pact which will provide information on the availability of services to develop more sustainable input.
- To navigate more plausible ways in which they can deal with climate change, prolonged dry spells that lead to poor crop harvest, link with organizations that can provide famine resistant crops and animals.
- Continue with the implementation of the GRF commitment of refugees on self-reliance, supporting education and
- Collect and report data on the progress of fulfilment of the 2023 GRF pledges

Compiled by,

The ULEARN TEAM